

not know the remote future of any of these variations, nor the manner in which existing bird species were evolved.

The subspecies theory has often been justified on the ground that it is a convenient method of handling geographic variations.<sup>1</sup> One has only to read Dr. Oberholser's "Monograph of the Genus *Chordeiles*"<sup>2</sup> to learn that the attempt to give definiteness to indefinite variations involves the student in an interminable maze. It is maintained that the only way out of the subspecies dilemma is to treat geographic variation in the same manner as dichromatic and individual variations are commonly treated.

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THE NEST AND EGGS OF WAYNE'S WARBLER (*DENDROICA VIRENS WAYNEI*) TAKEN NEAR MOUNT PLEASANT, S. C.

BY ARTHUR T. WAYNE.

THE hope of finding the nest and eggs of this new bird was eagerly looked forward to during the spring of this year, and on March 20, 1919, I visited the place where the type specimen was taken on April 25, 1918. A few males were heard singing from the topmost branches of some tall, gigantic, deciduous trees, and were also seen to fly into very tall pines, which latter trees the birds seemed to prefer.

On March 31 I again visited the place, and although convinced that the birds were mated and the females engaged in constructing nests it was impossible to catch even a glimpse of the latter, and the males left no clue as to the whereabouts of their mates. Although much discouraged I had not given up hope, and on April 18 Mr. J. H. Moessner, who accompanied me and who took me on the previous trips in his automobile, made every effort to locate the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dwight, *Auk*, Vol. XXI, 1904, p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 86, 1914; see especially pp. 16-18.

female and, if possible, find the nest. About 4 o'clock P. M. on April 18 I discovered a female, and with the aid of Mr. Moessner, who watched her closely, we saw the bird make a long flight and apparently stop in or near a live oak tree. We hastened to the spot, and finding no trace of her began to lose heart, when Mr. Moessner called my attention to a minute, dark spot on the terminal end of a live oak limb among numerous twigs which were branching in every direction. I then suggested to him to throw some small sticks near the nest so as to startle the bird, if the minute object was, in reality, the nest. This he did, and after some dozen ineffectual efforts succeeded in striking the limb, which at once caused the sitting bird to leave.

The nest, as I have said, was built in a live oak tree and on the end of a horizontal branch among twigs which radiated in every direction, and was absolutely concealed, being about thirty-eight feet above the ground. I of course made an attempt to secure the prize at once, although I knew the nest was inaccessible without rope or some other material for assistance, as there were no limbs above or beneath that upon which the nest was situated, and, although I tried, my attempt proved a failure. On April 21 I went again with Mr. Moessner, he bringing about 200 feet of Manila rope with which to draw in the limb to another live oak tree about twelve feet away, which I climbed, and after I had adjusted the ropes over the limb, which he was then to draw in to me, I requested him to go slowly, but the limb yielded only a little, although considerable pressure was exerted. Sad to relate, without a moments warning, the limb snapped off and the four fresh eggs that the nest contained were dashed to fragments on the ground. My hopes were likewise shattered, and I would have gladly fallen in order that the eggs might have been saved!

The nest, which is a beautiful object, is small and compact, measuring  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches in height by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches in depth. It is constructed of strips of fine bark and weed stems, over which is wound externally the black substance that invariably is present in the lining of the nests of Bachman's Warbler (*Vermivora bachmani*). The interior of the nest is chiefly composed of a beautiful ochraceous buff substance, doubtless from the unfolding leaves of some fern, and a few feathers. The remnants of the eggs were sorrow-

fully but carefully examined and were found to be white or whitish, speckled and spotted with brownish red and lilac in the form of a wreath at the larger end.

On April 28 I again visited the locality, and was accompanied by two ladies, Miss Louise Petigru Ford of Aiken, S. C., and Miss Marion J. Pellew of Washington, D. C., both of whom are enthusiastic students of ornithology, and acquainted with most of the land birds found in the eastern United States. Our visit to the swamp was with the hope of finding the female (whose eggs were destroyed on April 21) in the act of building another nest, but although this was partially accomplished, as far as seeing the bird and watching her closely from tree to tree, she finally eluded us and could not be found again.

A very young bird just from the nest and unable to fly more than a few feet was being fed by the male parent, which shows that the birds breed irregularly. This young bird was collected (after about twenty minutes deliberation) and proved to be a male. At last I suggested to my companions to visit a spot about a mile and a half from the place where the female had eluded us, as I had seen a pair of the birds in question frequenting two magnolia trees of large size in the densest portion of the swamp. Upon arriving at the place and pointing out the magnolias to my friends, my attention was arrested almost at once by a Warbler coming from the northward of the magnolias, and which I soon identified, as a female *Dendroica virens waynei*. We kept our eyes riveted upon her, each of us taking stands around the two magnolias and thus encircling them. Miss Ford being on the southern side of one of the trees saw the female go to her nest and informed me of the fact at once. This nest was built near the extremity of a very long, drooping magnolia limb, but on the horizontal portion of it and about twenty-five feet above the ground. Near at hand, about ten feet away, a very slender ash tree grew, whose topmost branch reached the top of the nest on a level. I climbed this tree, and with the aid of a long limb that I cut from the ash drew in the limb and then attached it by two leather field-glass straps to the sapling and abstracted the four heavily incubated eggs that the nest contained.

This nest was concealed from above by the large magnolia

leaves. It measures  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches in height by 2 inches in depth and is constructed of strips of bark externally, over which is Spanish moss and hypnum moss held together by a large quantity of caterpillar silk. The interior of the nest is lavishly lined with the beautiful ochraceous buff substance from the young fern leaves, as in the first nest.

The eggs are of a white or whitish color speckled and spotted in the form of a wreath around the larger end with brownish red and lilac, and measure  $.60 \times .50$ ,  $.60 \times .50$ ,  $.60 \times .50$ ,  $.60 \times .49$  inch. I have known this bird ever since May 4, 1885, when I took a male at Caw Caw Swamp, Colleton County, S. C., while on a collecting trip with my friend the late William Brewster. I gave the bird to him in the flesh, and in his collection it still remains, but the nest and eggs have remained unknown until brought to light by this season's research.

My thanks are extended to Misses Ford and Pellew, who rendered me such valuable assistance on this memorable occasion.

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## A HERONRY ON LAKE CORMORANT, MINNESOTA.

BY HORACE GUNTHERP.

LAKE CORMORANT is located in the southwest corner of Becker County, Minnesota, and really consists of a chain of four or five small lakes extending in a general east and west direction with the exception of the last one in the series, which is situated north of the most western one. In a dry season, like the past summer, these lakes are almost, if not entirely, separated from each other by mud flats covered with a rank growth of rushes. In a wet year a rowboat can be polled through these shallow connecting straits with comparative ease. The shores of the lakes are in some places rocky, being composed of piles of glacial boulders, while in others they are shallow, with a muddy bottom in which rushes and submerged water plants grow abundantly, while here